Excel Interview Questions with Answers (Shweta Ghotekar)

# 1. VLOOKUP Interview Questions & Answers

Q: What is VLOOKUP and when would you use it?  
A: VLOOKUP is a vertical lookup function that searches for a value in the first column of a range and returns a value in the same row from a specified column. Used for looking up employee names, prices, regions, etc.  
  
Q: What are the limitations of VLOOKUP?  
A: It only looks to the right of the lookup column, breaks if columns are inserted, and is slower on large datasets.  
  
Q: Example of VLOOKUP:  
=VLOOKUP("South", A2:D100, 4, FALSE) → Returns value from 4th column where "South" is found.  
  
Q: Why does VLOOKUP break if columns are inserted?  
A: Because column index number is static (like 4), so inserting columns changes the data layout but not the formula.

# HLOOKUP Interview Questions & Answers

## HLOOKUP Interview Questions & Examples

Q1: What is HLOOKUP?  
A: HLOOKUP searches for a value in the first row of a table and returns a value from a specified row number in the same column.  
  
Syntax:  
=HLOOKUP(lookup\_value, table\_array, row\_index\_num, [range\_lookup])

Q2: Practical Example  
| | A | B | C |  
|---------|-------|--------|--------|  
| Dept | HR | IT | Sales |  
| Salary | 40000 | 50000 | 45000 |  
  
=HLOOKUP("IT", A1:C2, 2, FALSE)  
Result: 50000

Q3: VLOOKUP vs HLOOKUP Summary  
| Feature | VLOOKUP | HLOOKUP |  
|------------|---------------------|--------------------|  
| Orientation| Vertical | Horizontal |  
| Looks in | First column | First row |  
| Use when | Data in columns | Data in rows |

Q: What is the difference between VLOOKUP and HLOOKUP?  
A: VLOOKUP searches vertically down columns, HLOOKUP searches horizontally across rows.  
  
Q: When is HLOOKUP used?  
A: When data is organized in rows, like quarters or months.  
  
Example: =HLOOKUP("Q1", A1:D4, 2, FALSE)

# XLOOKUP Interview Questions & Answers

## Q. XLOOKUP Interview Questions & Practical Examples

Q1: What is XLOOKUP in Excel?  
A: XLOOKUP is a modern lookup function that replaces older functions like VLOOKUP and HLOOKUP. It can look up values in vertical or horizontal arrays and return values from the left or right of the lookup column.  
  
Syntax:  
=XLOOKUP(lookup\_value, lookup\_array, return\_array, [if\_not\_found], [match\_mode], [search\_mode])

Q2: Find Employee Name from ID  
Dataset:  
| Emp ID | Name | Department |  
|--------|-------|------------|  
| 101 | Raj | HR |  
| 102 | Seema | IT |  
| 103 | Amit | Finance |  
  
Formula:  
=XLOOKUP(102, A2:A4, B2:B4)  
Result: Seema

Q3: Handle Missing Values with Custom Message  
=XLOOKUP(105, A2:A4, C2:C4, "Not Found")  
Result: Not Found

Q4: Return Multiple Columns  
=XLOOKUP(103, A2:A4, B2:C4)  
Result: Amit | Finance

Q5: Lookup with Approximate Match (Grades)  
Grade Table:  
| Marks | Grade |  
|-------|--------|  
| 90 | A+ |  
| 80 | A |  
| 70 | B |  
| 60 | C |  
| 50 | D |  
  
=XLOOKUP(85, A2:A6, B2:B6, , -1)  
Result: A

Q6: Reverse Lookup (Search Right to Left)  
| Name | Emp ID |  
|-------|--------|  
| Raj | 101 |  
| Seema | 102 |  
| Amit | 103 |  
  
=XLOOKUP("Seema", A2:A4, B2:B4)  
Result: 102

Q7: Find Last Matching Entry (Bottom to Top Search)  
| Date | Product | Sales |  
|------------|---------|-------|  
| 01-Jul-24 | Pen | 100 |  
| 02-Jul-24 | Pencil | 80 |  
| 03-Jul-24 | Pen | 150 |  
  
=XLOOKUP("Pen", B2:B4, C2:C4, "Not Found", 0, -1)  
Result: 150

Q: What is XLOOKUP and how is it better?  
A: XLOOKUP is the modern replacement for VLOOKUP and HLOOKUP. It can search both directions (left and right), return default values, and doesn't break when columns are inserted.  
  
Syntax:  
=XLOOKUP(lookup\_value, lookup\_array, return\_array, [if\_not\_found], [match\_mode], [search\_mode])  
  
Q: What is 'match\_mode'?  
A: It controls type of match: exact (0), exact or next smaller (-1), exact or next larger (1), wildcard (2).  
  
Q: What is 'search\_mode'?  
A: It controls the direction: first-to-last (1) or last-to-first (-1).

# 4. INDEX & MATCH Q&A

Q: What does INDEX do?  
A: It returns the value of a cell at the intersection of a row and column within a range.  
  
Q: What does the number '2' indicate in =INDEX(B2:B6, 2)?  
A: It returns the 2nd value from the range B2:B6.  
  
Q: What does MATCH do?  
A: MATCH returns the position of a value in a list. Example: MATCH("Mango", A1:A5, 0) → 3  
  
Q: Why use INDEX-MATCH over VLOOKUP?  
A: It's more flexible, can look to the left, and doesn't break with column insertions.

# 5. COUNTA Function

Q: What does COUNTA do?  
A: COUNTA counts all non-empty cells in a range.  
  
Example: =COUNTA(A1:A10) → Counts how many cells are not blank.  
  
Q: How is COUNTA different from COUNT?  
A: COUNT counts only numeric values. COUNTA counts numbers, text, dates, etc.

# 6. Logical Functions (IF, AND, OR)

Q: How does the IF function work?  
A: IF tests a condition and returns one value if TRUE and another if FALSE.  
  
Example: =IF(A2>5000, "Bonus", "No Bonus")  
  
Q: How to use multiple conditions?  
A: Use AND/OR inside IF.  
=IF(AND(A2="South", B2>5000), "Top Performer", "Average")  
  
Q: What is the use case in interviews?  
A: Used in bonus calculation, grading systems, performance evaluation.

# 7. Basic vs Advanced Excel

Q: What are basic Excel skills?  
A: Data entry, formatting, basic formulas (SUM, AVERAGE, COUNT).  
  
Q: What are advanced Excel skills?  
A: Pivot Tables, VLOOKUP, INDEX-MATCH, data cleaning, charts, dashboards, Power Query.  
  
Q: How do you clean raw data?  
A: Remove duplicates, trim spaces, convert text to columns, handle blanks.

# 8. Scenario-Based Questions

Q: How to find duplicates?  
A: Use Conditional Formatting → Highlight Duplicates.  
  
Q: How to make dropdown list?  
A: Use Data Validation → List.  
  
Q: How to summarize data?  
A: Use Pivot Tables for region-wise, category-wise summaries.

# 9. Practice Exercises with Answers

Q1: Use VLOOKUP to return sales for "East"  
A: =VLOOKUP("East", A2:D100, 3, FALSE)  
  
Q2: Use INDEX-MATCH to find employee name by ID  
A: =INDEX(B2:B100, MATCH("E102", A2:A100, 0))  
  
Q3: IF+AND to check high sales in South  
A: =IF(AND(A2="South", B2>5000), "High", "Low")  
  
Q4: Use COUNTA to count all filled feedbacks  
A: =COUNTA(D2:D100)